

The LAY-MONK.

Dixisti pulchre; nunquam vidi melius consilium dari!

Ter.

*Mirabor si sciet inter
Noscere mendacem verumq; beatus amicum.*

Hor.

From WEDNESDAY, January 27. to FRIDAY, January 29. 1713.

A Question was started the other Day among the Members of our Society, What were the chief Marks of a great Mind? We all gave our Opinions differently, according as we were led to think on a Subject so suddenly propos'd, and which would admit of a Variety of Judgments. I cou d not but be extremely pleas'd with what Sir EUSTACE said on this Occasion, that he thought one of the chief Signs of a great Mind was *to be capable of receiving Advice*. This Capacity is so rarely found, that we see the greatest Part of the World are agreed upon the Matter, and seem resolv'd by Consent to play the Hypocrites with one another. The Person that asks Advice very often means nothing by it, but to tell you what he has either done already, or will certainly do. The Giver of Advice is aware of this, and therefore repays one Cheat with another. Instead of considering the Matter propos'd, he is fitting his Friend, like a Fortune-teller, to get out of him proper Intelligence; and by that time he has discover'd his Inclination, the Querist has answer'd himself.

It is by Means of this Weakness in human Nature, continu'd Sir EUSTACE, that Great Men are supply'd with Flatterers, and Princes with Favourites. The latter, instead of studying the State, find it a shorter Way to study the Passions of the Prince they serve. Such a Counsellor has little Occasion for Capacity or Knowledge. His Business lies in a narrower Compass. He only waits, like

an Eccho, to hear his Prince say, *I will do it*; and he immediately replies, *Do it*.

This, says NED FREEMAN, is my Kinsman Tom Careless's Way of governing his Wife. She never takes the least Step without his Approbation. If she has a Mind to take the Air, to go to Cards, to see a Play, visit a Friend, or to shut her self up and see no body, she never fails to ask his Opinion first. Tom puts on a grave Face, and violently perswades her to what he knows she is resolv'd on. She constantly obeys him, and he is by this means the most absolute Governour in the World.

There is no Article in which we meet with more frequent Instances of the Hypocrisy of asking Advice, than in the Affair of Marriage. Mr. JOHNSON on this Occasion put us in mind of an humorous Scene of *Moliere*, in which this is pleasantly rallied: And as I fancy a slight Sketch of it may be diverting to such of my Readers as are not acquainted with the Original, and will at the same time fully express the Moral design'd in this Paper, I shall here give it, without the Strictness of a close Translation.

BUFFLE and FRANKLY meeting.

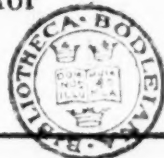
Buff.] Dear Mr. *Frankly*, you are well met. I was going to look for you. *Fran.*] Upon what Occasion, pray? *Buff.*] You must know I have an Affair upon my Hands, a Matter, I assure you, of Consequence; and it is always prudent upon such Oc-

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Occasions to take the Advice of some solid and judicious Friend. *Fran.*] I'm oblig'd to you. Pray what is it? *Buff.*] I'll tell you. But first you shall swear not to flatter me. Don't imagine I am to be put off with a Compliment; I must have your real Opinion. *Fran.*] You shall. *Buff.*] I know the Way of the World; Sincerity is scarce. But I despise the Man that calls himself my Friend, and will not speak freely. *Fran.*] Well, you are in the right. But to the Affair. *Buff.*] You promise me then upon the Faith of a Friend, that you'll be very sincere with me. *Fran.*] I do. But your Affair? *Buff.*] Why, what d'ye think if I should marry? *Fran.*] Who? You marry? What my Friend Mr. Buffle marry? *Buff.*] Yes, I; I myself, in my own proper Person, your Friend and Servant Jeffrey Buffle. *Fran.*] I can't tell. You must answer me a Question or two before I can advise you— In the first Place how old are you? *Buff.*] How old am I?— I don't know—How old?—Why what signifies that? I am sound, as you see, and hearty. Troth, I can't very well tell how old. *Fran.*] No? That's strange. Pray how old were you when we were first acquainted? *Buff.*] I don't know—Twenty, I believe; I could not be more. *Fran.*] I think we were eight Years together at Rome. *Buff.*] Well. *Fran.* Seven Years I have heard you say you were in France. *Buff.*] Well. *Fran.*] How long did you stay afterwards in Holland? *Buff.*] Five Years and a half. *Fran.*] Do you remember in what Year you came home to England? *Buff.*] In the Year 1695. *Fran.*] From 1695 to 1713 is eighteen Years, I take it; and five Years in Holland is three and twenty. Seven in France makes thirty. Eight at Rome is thirty eight; and twenty, is fifty eight. So that by your own Account, Mr. Buffle, you must be now about your fifty eighth or fifty ninth Year. Is not this true? *Buff.*] True? No. It's impossible. You are mistaken, Mr. Frankly; you are out in your Reckoning. *Fran.*] Pardon me, I'm not out in my Reckoning. Look you, Mr. Buffle, you have made me promise to be sincere with you; and therefore in plain Terms, Marriage, in my Opinion, is not your Business. It is a Matter on which young People should think deliberately before they enter upon it, and old ones not at all; and if it sometimes happens to be a Folly, how inexcusable would that Folly be at an Age in which we are expected to be wiser? I speak my naked Thoughts: Marriage is honourable; but for a Man of your Years to think of marrying! Come, come, you are well as you are at present, and why will you venture a Change which may prove for

the worse? *Buff.*] Hark you, Frankly, I am resolv'd to marry, d'ye see. I have not told you yet who the dear Creature is: Look you, Sir, I shall not be so ridiculous as you imagine. *Fran.*] O that alters the Case. You did not tell me that. *Buff.*] Such a Woman, Mr. Frankly, so fine a Woman! In short, I am in Love with her. *Fran.*] You are in Love, you say? *Buff.*] Positively; and I have settled Matters with her Father. *Fran.*] With her Father? *Buff.*] Most certainly. You must know we are to be marry'd to Morrow Morning. *Fran.*] O your humble Servant. Marry, marry by all Means. *Buff.*] Why ay—I can't do better I think. My Age, quotha? Why what signifies my Age? I am no Cripple, you see; I can walk. I don't want either a Coach or a Chair. I have a Stomach like a Ploughman.— I despise your young Dogs of thirty. Look in my Face, I am hale, fresh, and strong; and have all my Teeth in my Head as sound as a Blackamoor's.—My Age quotha?—Ha, Mr. Frankly, what d'you say to me now? *Fran.*] Marry. *Buff.*] I will. You must know I had once a great Aversion to Matrimony; but I have alter'd my Opinion. I would be loth the Race of the Buffles should be lost. *Fran.*] O by no means. *Buff.*] Then you advise me to marry? *Fran.*] Advise you? You must, you shall marry; I'll never forgive you, if you don't. You loose Time; dispatch your Affair as soon as possible. *Buff.*] Is that your Opinion? *Fran.*] Certainly. *Buff.*] Dear Mr. Frankly, let me embrace you. Well, a faithful Friend is a Jewel. *Fran.*] One Word more. Pray who is to be the happy Lady? *Buff.*] Arietta. *Fran.*] Arietta? What, the young, the bright, the gay Arietta? *Buff.*] The same. *Fran.*] Bless me! What Trapwell's fine Daughter? *Buff.*] Ay—What, you know her? Ha, what do you say to it, Mr. Frankly? *Fran.*] O marry, marry her by all Means. You'll be finely marry'd! *Buff.*] D'ye think so? Well, you've charm'd me. I am infinitely oblig'd to you for your Advice. Pray come to my Wedding. *Fran.*] I will—The young, the gay, the beautiful Arietta! to Mr. Jeffrey Buffle, who is but fifty eight!— A most agreeable Match! A delicious Match! Mr. Buffle, I kiss your Hands. *Buff.*] Honest Frankly, Fare thee well—Hark ye, be sure you don't fail to come— I don't know how it happens, but all the World is merry that hears of this Match! I shall be prodigiously happy. Well, I am now the most satisfy'd of Mortals!

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